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Nation

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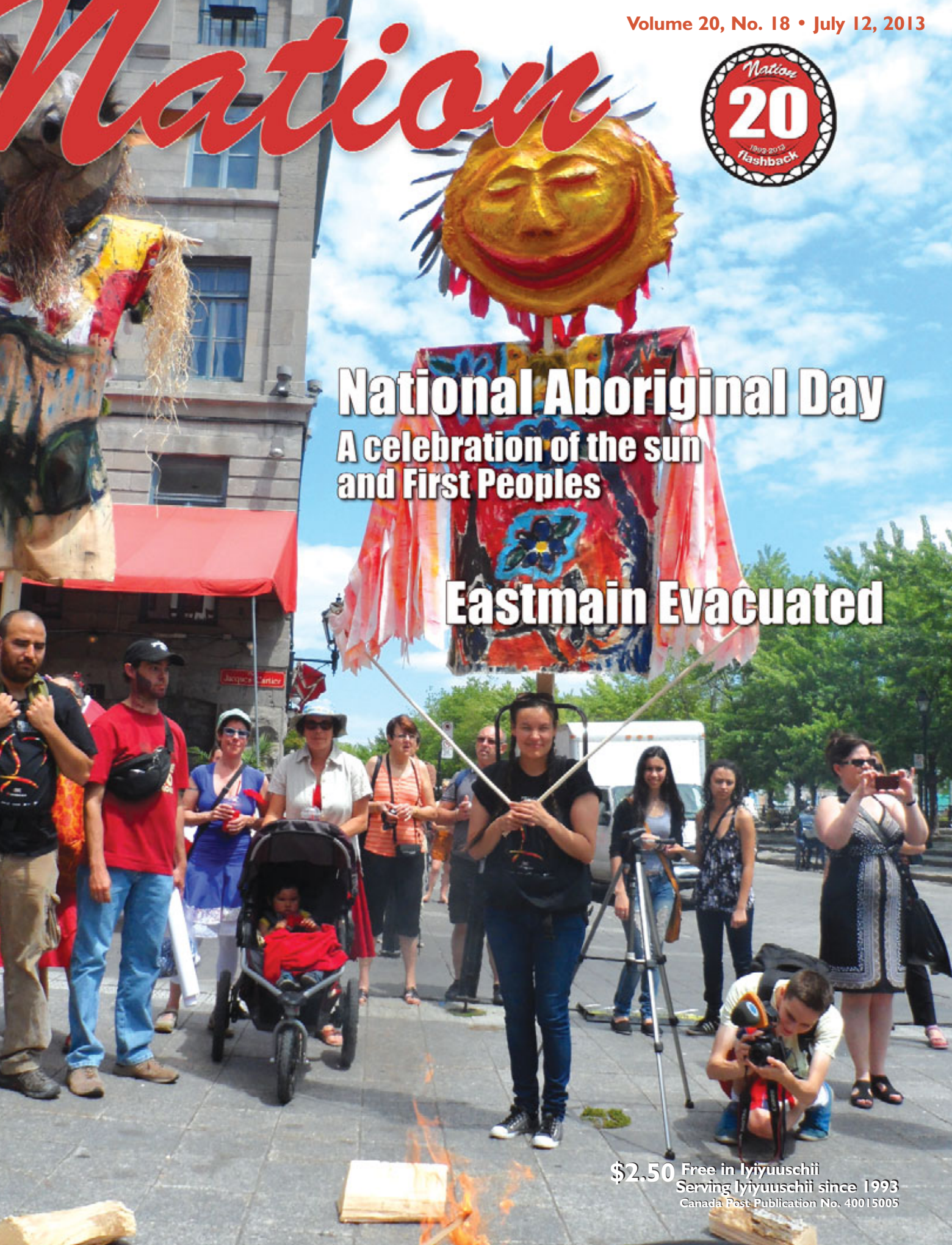

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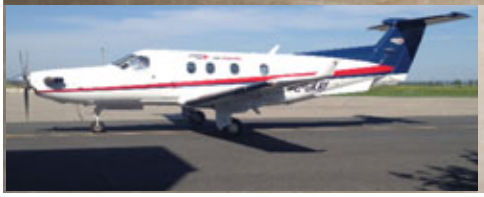

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Leadership to be proud of

by Will Nicholls

One must give credit where credit is due. Unexpectedly, this means the Quebec government under the current Parti Québécois administration. They have surprised and delighted me in their recent actions.

Most recently, Quebec's Minister of Sustainable Development, Environment, Wildlife and Parks, Yves-François Blanchet, has notified Strateco that he plans to "refuse to issue the permit for the Matoush underground exploration project" due to "a lack of sufficient social acceptability."

This decision not to issue the certificate of authorization is astonishing and goes against the way things were done in the past. While this is not a done deal as Strateco has 60 days to respond (as of June 25, 2013) it is good news for the Cree of Mistissini.

Personally when I first heard of the "social acceptability" concept a few years back I thought of it as just more government doublespeak and was pleasantly disappointed to be wrong in this case, and to discover that the government actually meant what they said.

I was told the term "social acceptability" first came up as part of the Paix des braves Agreement and seeing it honoured gives the PQ administration credibility, and not only with the Cree people.

Naysayers may point out that Quebec may have been reacting to the court cases Strateco initiated against the government, but the end results speak for themselves. The fact that more than 300 Quebec municipalities oppose uranium exploration is certainly a political vote winner for an unpopular minority government. A decision that is beneficial in so many ways is a win-win situation unless you own Strateco stock. We know they will fight on but with fewer options than before.

Secondly, the passing of Bill 42: *An Act establishing the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government and Introducing Certain Legislative Amendments Concerning the Cree Nation Government*. This is a sign that racial or colonial attitudes have evolved for the better. With this legislation, both Cree and non-Cree inhabitants now have a say in how Eeyou Istchee is governed.

In addressing Quebec's National Assembly, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come said this will "benefit the Cree, the Jamesians and all Quebecers for generations to come." He added, "To call this innovative would be an understatement." Coon Come said that he had never seen such a governance partnership between Aboriginals and settlers anywhere else in the world.

Though Coon Come rightly thanked Premier Pauline Marois and her government for their leadership in adopting Bill 42, he acknowledged the unanimous support of all parties.

Quebec's Minister of Regions, Gaétan Lelièvre, who piloted the bill through the Assembly, explained the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government, coming into existence Jan. 1, 2014, will be composed of 11 Cree representatives and 11 elected officials from non-Aboriginal settlements.

So there is credit due to all the people who made these two decisions that will affect us all. It just goes to show I shouldn't underestimate the ability of politicians to do what is right for the people every now and then. This time they did it in a big way and one that will bring a better future for all of Quebec.

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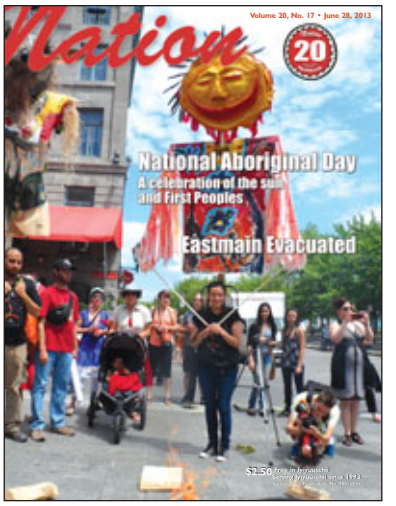

photo by:
Amy German

Mayday for mayors

by Sonny Orr

I can't go a day without hearing of some politician from the south getting blasted in every medium over the corruption and collusion scandals that have hit the Montreal area during the last several months. What really gets me is that this corruption has happened over and over again and no one really did anything about it, even though they knew about it. I have a friend in city council in Montreal who once told me that there was so much corruption that he felt like bailing out, but held on to ensure that his district wouldn't be hit with these problems by his successor, so he is still a city councillor and a good one at that.

Now, that makes me think about closer to home and right in the communities – does this happen in our own backyard? Are there homegrown corruption scandals and corruptors to uproot and expose? Considering that we didn't really have any real share of any construction contracts for the first development of the James Bay Project, which cost nearly 20 billion smackaroos to build, what of the more recent undertakings?

Take for example, all the housing contracts over the last 30 years, averaging 200 grand per, times 400 homes built a year. That equals about $2.4 billion. Wow, gimme a piece of that pie! And that's just the small stuff! What about all those major buildings? Let's see now, eight times new band offices and other large things times (let's say) $5 million per band office and $5 million for other things equals an awful lot of moolah. Then there's two entire communities, Chisasibi and Oujé and perhaps, in the future, a small little hamlet of Washaw Sibi.

This adds up to a lot of market potential for corruption possibilities. I know that we are audited time and time again, so it would have to be a pretty slick operator to fool the auditors. Or is it? Most auditors just give an expressed opinion and never really audit books in detail, unless of course, it is beneficial to them to make entries to correct things or to prove their worth when it comes to verification of everything, which of course, costs oodles of money. So either way, it costs a lot to ensure that the projects are carried out according to plan.

Speaking of plans, when do contractors actually stick to the plan at hand? Only when there are a lot of inspectors around and the client is some huge mega corporation who wants to make sure they can't be sued for any problems arising from their undertakings. So we don't fit in that picture (yet). But we do fit in the picture as contractors, which may lead to conflicts when it comes to awarding contracts locally. So this is still fertile ground for collusion. Since nearly everyone in power is aware of all the facts and can pass the details on to family and friendly companies for a favour or two… accidently and coincidently, or course.

So, where does that bring us in this situation? It is perhaps something we should look at more closely. The lessons from Montreal should wake us up and force us to take a closer look at ourselves to see if there are situations similar to those of the southern areas. Bwuhaaahaahaa… (said with an evil cackle).

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Burning amok

Eastmain partially evacuated as forest fires rage

by Jeremy East

Over 300 people were evacuated from the community of Eastmain June 27, as forest fires that have ravaged the area for weeks spread within kilometres of the Cree community. Thick smoke permeated the air throughout town as Elders, children and those with health or respiratory issues were taken to Val-d'Or for their own safety. The fire has been burning steadily and increasing in size since June 12.

"SOPFEU (Société de protection des forêts contre le feu) has at least 70 firefighters from out of the community, and we also have local firefighters," said Eastmain Deputy Chief Johnny Tomatuk, adding that community members who were still in town were prepared to defend Eastmain if the need should arise.

Government agencies and fire prevention teams have rushed to keep people in the area safe and are attempting to tame the blaze using controlled burning techniques and water bombers.

"Right now the fire is burning about four kilometres north of the Eastmain River," Tomatuk told the Nation July 3. According to Tomatuk, the blaze is claiming hundreds of thousands of hectares of forest per day, with an estimated 270,000 hectares lost July 2 alone. "I've spoken with older generations, parents and Elders. None of them have seen a fire of this size in their lifetime. It's likely one of the largest forest fires ever in northern Quebec," he said.

photo: Bessie Tomatuk

The intensity and reach of the fire has left many questioning whether the blaze has the potential to affect other communities. In Waskaganish, Director of Public Security Ernest Blueboy reported distant smoke sightings after a strong northeast wind. Similar sightings have occurred in Mistissini and Nemaska.

"I'VE SPOKEN WITH OLDER GENERATIONS, PARENTS AND ELDERS. NONE OF THEM HAVE SEEN A FIRE OF THIS SIZE IN THEIR LIFETIME. IT'S LIKELY ONE OF THE LARGEST FOREST FIRES EVER IN NORTHERN QUEBEC."

The fire has also affected industry in the area. Eastmain Radio reported that workers at Goldcorp's Eleonore project were evacuated July 3 due to the intensity of smoke in the region. Dry weather and scorching climates have only fuelled the fire, and raised the potential of new fires starting.

"It's so dry that a cigarette on the side of the road can easily start a blaze," said Wemindji Fire Chief Gregory Visitor. Recently Visitor tried to quell such a blaze with firefighters and volunteers along the highway roughly 100 km outside of the Wemindji before it burned out of control. In the south, smog and air-quality warnings stretched across the province from Gatineau to Drummondville.

Although many of Eastmain's residents remained displaced as of press time, Tomatuk says that the support from the emergency and environmental services involved in recovery efforts has been overwhelming, as has the outreach from other nations across James Bay and Canada.

The unpredictable nature of the fire has kept the local authorities from taking any chances. The Eeyou Eenou Police and the Sûreté du Québec announced several road closures early in the month. The James Bay Highway was partially closed for an undetermined period of time, with SQ roadblocks preventing anyone from travelling above km 275 or below km 518. Eastmain residents who were not in their community before the fire situation worsened have been unable to return home, and many are with the evacuees in Val-d'Or.

Although smoke from the fire filled Eastmain for days in late June, favourable winds kept the air relatively clear for officials from Parks Canada, SOPFEU and remaining community members once the evacuation had ended. However, power failures throughout Eastmain were causing additional problems, Tomatuk noted.

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Reclaiming orphaned mines

Lush vegetation covers the scars of the abandoned Opémiska mine near Chapais

by Akiva Levitas

Lucien Bordeleau of Biolistik Bordeleau

The word "byproduct" often comes up when talking about the environment. We all know what it means: something that comes as a result of an action or process that has occurred. In the mining world, the byproducts of raw material extraction are heavy chemical residues and tailing sites affecting the ecosystem of the area.

But another byproduct in the industry – one that is not discussed as much – is what happens to mines when the volatile raw-resource market dips below the profit margin and mining operators abandon their properties. This leads to orphaned mines, over 600 in Quebec alone.

Abandoned mining operations usually leave behind soil that is far too acidic to support life; a visible scar on the land. In dealing with this issue, Chapais Mayor Steve Gamache unveiled the results of groundbreaking reclamation work on the orphaned Opémiska copper mine, which was abandoned over 20 years ago.

The coordinated effort brought together Chapais Énergie, the Regional Conference of Elected Officers of James Bay, the Canadian Institute of Mines, FaunENord and the provincial government. Ungava MNA Luc Ferland spoke at the gathering where he thanked FaunENord, an environmental group energized by many young volunteers.

"There aren't that many environmental organizations in the region and it is difficult to get things coordinated and done," Ferland said. "The amazing team does great work not only for the area, but for Quebec as a whole."

The provincial government has been working closely with researchers on the issue of orphaned mines. "What we have here today is truly groundbreaking environmental work," said Minister of Natural Resources Martine Ouellet. "We want the north to be developed with respect to the environment, the local communities and economic benefits reaped by local and regional industries and Quebec as a whole."

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One person brought in to take on the challenge in the early 2000s was Lucien Bordeleau, whose Biolistik Bordeleau company pioneered a new method for bringing life back to the scarred land.

Bordeleau's ambitious plan included the big three industries in the region: lumber, energy and mining. The plan involved embedding a biomass composed of ash into the soil of the orphaned mine allowing organisms to thrive and to reduce the acidity in the surrounding ground.

"The goal is to recreate the layers in the soil that is natural to region. For it to get this way naturally would take over 1000 years," said Bordeleau. "But I don't have a 1000 years so we've worked on speeding it up."

Using ash as a base for the fertilization allows water to soak into the ground without washing away the biomass. This solves the problem of the other reclamation methods, which use a biomaterial and concrete to prevent runoff. The ash also provides an excellent environment for microbes and small organisms to thrive and cleanse the soil. The ash is a byproduct of the burning of wood chips by Chapais Énergie. This local eco-plant burns biomatter to generate renewable energy and already sells the ash as a fertilizer for local farmlands.

The program's success was immediately visible when the delegation visited the site of the reclaimed mine, which is surrounded by lush vegetation. Bordeleau spoke of stories where his team encountered wolves and bears among the wildlife that has returned to the area.

"In the springtime, some Natives set up camp in the far corner to hunt the geese that have returned," noted Bordeleau. Holes were dug to give the media a sense of how deep they had to penetrate in order to create an environment for sustainable growth.

Mining companies now must pay 70% of the costs of restoration over a span of 15 years. The new method of mining reclamation researched by Bordeleau cuts the cost of the current methods in use by 90% with the price per hectare going down from $2 million to $200,000.

The Quebec government is hoping that this new breakthrough will help free the province and even the country from the environmental damage caused by orphaned mines.

Many of the attendees were impressed by the work that Bordeleau and his team have accomplished at the Opémiska mine. But the main reason behind the initiative was evident when a group of Grade 6 students presented a birdhouse to Ouellet, who remarked that it is for future generations that lands scarred by mines must be reclaimed.

Lucien Bordeleau of Biolistik Bordeleau and Quebec Minister of Natural Resources Martine Ouellet

Mistissini Niimuuhiikan... Mistissini powwow

Mistissini is the place to be July 19-20. After too many years to count, this Cree community will finally be hosting a powwow. Says organizer Luke MacLeod: "Years ago, I asked an Elder if they had songs made just for dancing. He was a respected Elder who often sang using the Cree traditional drum at special occasions. He told me those were called 'Niimuuhiikan', thus the name chosen for our first modern powwow."

The Mistissini Niimuuhiikan will be a social event with powwow drums and dancers mixed with Cree culture and traditions. Bear Creek, a Grammy-nominated drum group, will be the host drum. Poplar Singers from North Bay will be co-host with drum groups from Chisasibi, Eastmain and Waswanipi rounding out the line-up.

"Our Cree traditional drum and dancers will showcase our culture," MacLeod said, and plans include a Walking Out Ceremony on the morning of the 20th followed by a feast that evening.

For more info, see Facebook pages Mistissini Powwow Group or Mistissini Traditional Powwow. "We welcome all to join us and experience our Cree culture and hospitality," said MacLeod.

Edith Cloutier named Member of the Order of Canada

Regroupement des Centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ) President Edith Cloutier has been appointed Member of the Order of Canada for her work and actions improving the living conditions of urban Aboriginals. RCAAQ said they were proud of her achievements centred mainly on the Native Friendship Centre Movement.

Cloutier said, "This is an opportunity to show a collective voice for Aboriginal peoples. In particular it highlights the Native Friendship Centres (NFC) and what we do for our people across Canada. No one is really aware of the work the NFC has done to make our people's lives better. I am proud to have this opportunity and be honoured in this way."

Added RCAAQ Vice-President Christine Jean: "Edith is an inspiring and visionary woman. She is also a very humble person who has always advocated the rights and interests of urban Aboriginal citizens. This recognition of her life path is a great pride for us. I

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think of all the positive impacts such an appointment will have on Aboriginal women and youth. Edith is living proof that with perseverance, one can advance a cause; her work motivates us to do even better."

The Order of Canada is one of the country's highest civilian honours. It was created in 1967, during Canada's centennial year, to recognize a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation.

Cloutier has been president of the RCAAQ for several years and executive director of the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre since the age of 23. She has received numerous other awards, including a National Aboriginal Achievement Award for Public Service in 2010 and being named a Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Québec in 2006.

PAQ announces new location

A new home for Montreal's disenfranchised Métis, First Nations and Inuit was announced June 19 at the Montreal Native Friendship Centre (MNFC). A traditional drum ceremony and a prayer by a member of the community started the evening for the announcement of the new building at the Projét Autochtone du Québec's (PAQ) general assembly.

PAQ board showcasing plans for new building

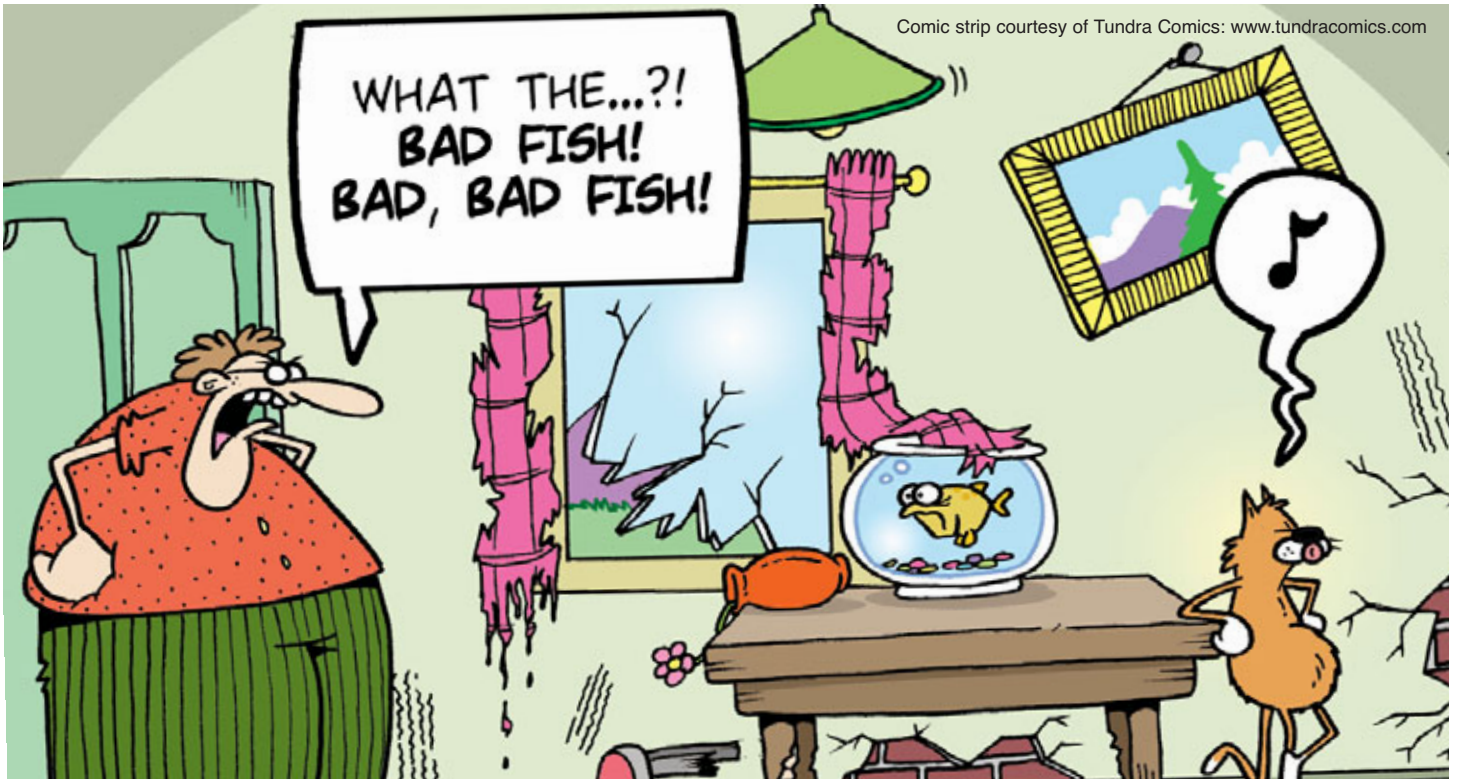
The new location will be right across the street from the old one on De la Gauchetière in downtown Montreal. The nine-year-old initiative had its beginnings at the MNFC and has come a long way since then. "Nothing is getting in PAQ's way from getting into this new building," says PAQ director Adrienne Campbell, before she presented graphic mock-ups of the new building giving a virtual tour of the new facility.

The new building is set to be opened in August 2014 with construction and remodeling work taking place to ensure the facility has all the amenities necessary for beds and the planned transition rooms for helping the homeless get back on their feet.

The project will cost around $5 million with a vote being called during the assembly in order to raise the borrowing limit to $10 million in order to fund the work. "Even though this is the biggest project we've undertaken, we won't lose our spirit or community identity," Campbell said.

Campbell reminded attendees that the new building would not mean a loss to the sense of community to which they have grown accustomed.

In a gesture of support, a representative from Makivik gave praise to PAQ for the great work they put in to caring for the disenfranchised and homeless amongst the urban Native population in Montreal.



A celebration of the sun and First Peoples

Enjoying National Aboriginal Day in Old Montreal

by Amy German

It was late morning as the throngs of First Nations participants clamoured together just beside Montreal City Hall to don their traditional garb and prepare for a ceremonious march through Place Jacques-Cartier in honour of National Aboriginal Day.

The event, organized by Terres en vues, the same organization that puts on Montreal's First Peoples Festival, brought together First Nations youth from across Canada and traditional singers and dancers from nearby Mohawk territory, Kahnawake.

According to Terres en vues executive director André Dudemaine, National Aboriginal Day is celebrated on June 21, the summer solstice, because mid-day is the point at which "the sky and the earth meet" – and this, he explained, was a very important moment for First Nations people.

Dudemaine was excited to present something new to the festival – large-scale masks that were made and being presented as puppetry by First Nations youth.

"They have created these beautiful masks and these are new spirits that are here with us now. They are a result of these youth coming together here in Montreal with Montrealers in the 21st century and this new regalia will be part of the Aboriginal community in Montreal and be part of our ceremonies," said Dudemaine.

Nunavik's Gabriel Uqaituk marched around his own mask through the square for the ceremony.

"These masks symbolize different things, but mainly ourselves. As a personal creation it had to look Native, but it was less about being Native and more about just expressing and being," said Uqaituk.

Swaneige, a youth from the Northwest Territories, had her mask mounted so all could see.

"We made these masks during a three-week atelier, starting with clay and then papier-mâché. I chose a fish but in creating it I drew inspiration from graffiti artists in Montreal," she explained.

Chad Diabo, one of the Buffalo Hat Singers, a traditional drum group that was invited to play at the event, was happy to be part of the event in Montreal and share his Native pride.

"It is really nice that Canadians have a day to celebrate National Aboriginal Day, but for us it is Aboriginal Day every day of the week. But, if Canadians can notice and celebrate us one day of the year, this can really serve as a foundation for building bridges and I will take that happily," said Diabo.

At noon the Elders, performers, mask carriers and other participants left the meeting point just north of the square and marched through the crowds to the beat of the drums.

They rendezvoused at a stage set up for the event at the southern exit of the square, where the singing, dancing and then lighting of the ceremonial fires took place.

According to Atonnion, a Mohawk Elder from Kahnawake who was in full traditional regalia for the dancing and singing at the ceremony, being able to participate in the festivities was a major display of pride.

"We were just so proud and happy to be able to do our traditional dancing and singing here," he said.

The same went for Singing Wind Deer who had her nine-month-old son in tow.

"Being here today means that I am proud to be who I am and I have brought my baby to show him just what his culture looks like. This is something that I want him to show his own children, so that he carries on the tradition down the generations," she said.

Joey Blacksmith, a Cree living in Montreal, had brought his family to Old Montreal to take in the celebration.

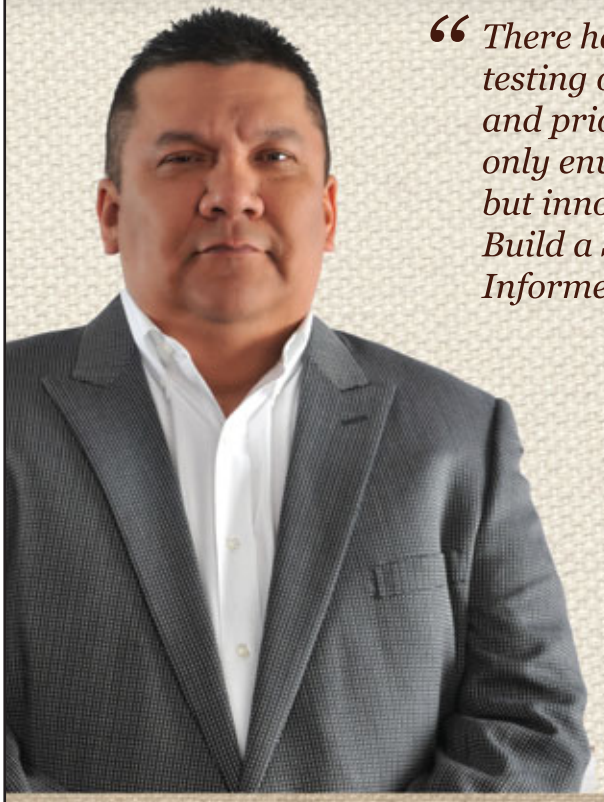
"I just got back from spending three weeks up north for work, but being at this sure does make us miss home. My kids are really happy to be here though," he said.

After presenting a variety of songs and dances as well as the traditional lighting of the sacred fire, the event culminated with traditional Friendship Dance, which invited audience participation.

People from all walks of life took part; Sikhs danced with Aboriginal women, provincial and municipal politicians with traditional dancers, and tourists with drummers. It was a remarkable blending of everyone present at this glorious event, as the sun beat down heavily on the first day of summer.

Vote Bertie Wapachee

For Deputy Grand Chief - GCCEI/CRA Elections 2013



"There has never been a better time than now to start testing out the next generation of leaders. The interests and priorities of the next generation of leaders do not only envision building on the foundations of the past, but innovating for the future and forging ahead to Build a Strong, Vibrant, Healthy, Educated and Informed Cree Nation."

Through bold policy and vision we must strive for social change and equity for all. Engaging members and local communities is my main priority. This is a collective effort that will require open dialogue and consistent effort from all institutions and individuals. The needs and priorities of our members must be addressed so that future generations can enjoy a good quality of life and take constructive action to practice the Cree way of life on our land. Most importantly we must create opportunities for all and build on the potential that already exists in our Nation. We remain inspired by the cultural foundations of our ancestors while encouraging the new generation to dream, to excel and to lead us into the future.

I am committed to serve my people and realize their vision for a self-sufficient Cree Nation.

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- Resource Development Policy
- Socio-Economic Analysis and Development
- Capacity Building
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- Amend Income Security Program
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Breaking the silence

The Waswanipi Elders' Council is leading the fight against Elder abuse

by Jesse Staniforth

A few generations ago, it would be unthinkable for a Cree person to shout or swear at an Elder, let alone hurt or abuse one.

However, Irene Otter, the Elders' coordinator for community programs and member of the Elders' Council in Waswanipi, says that times have changed, and the changes have made things worse. In the week leading up to June 15, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, Otter helped coordinate a series of awareness-raising events in Waswanipi, including a snack-and-social, a movie night, a visit-or-help-an-Elder day, and an awareness walk. The goal of all of these events was to start the community addressing the problem of Elder abuse and to start changing the way it looks at its Elders.

"In the old days, people never raised their voice at an Elder, never swore at an Elder, and watched their language when they were speaking with Elders," Otter said. "People helped Elders with whatever work they needed done, like sewing, cleaning, smoking fish or drying meat for pâshteuyâs – they always had someone helping them."

Today, however, Otter says there is a silent epidemic of Elder abuse occurring in Cree communities, ranging from people verbally abusing Elders, to others stealing from Elders or hurting them. All of it, Otter says, can be traced back to the decline in the position Elders have in the communities. Today, many Elders are thought of as nothing more than someone young people can ask for money.

Even when it comes to day-to-day necessities like food, Otter notes, Elders have lost the privileged position they used to hold in Cree society.

"Before, when someone went hunting," she explained, "the Elders were given part of whatever was caught. They were given that freely. Now, people sell the meat, because people need to eat."

While Otter recognizes that necessity, she thinks that communities should recognize the separate role that Elders have from others. "They should just give the meat to the Elders, and sell it to other people," she argues.

CHRISTOPHER NAPASH

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But the change in attitude toward sharing food is a symptom of the general erosion in Cree respect for Elders. The end result is disdain and, finally, abuse.

"Elders come and tell us what's going on in their lives," Otter said at the Elders' Council. "Elders are starting to talk and open up. They tell me their stories, and we try to find solutions. Some of them don't have to say anything. Under this program I see many different things. People are abusing the money [Elders] have. There's some who are physically abused. Some of them, it's their children who are affected."

All of this, says Otter, is fallout from colonialism.

"When we went to residential school, we lost a lot of our culture, and the teachings from our Elders," she said. Having traditional culture taken away meant Crees no longer knew how their society worked in the time of their ancestors. The damage caused by Indian residential schools left whole sections of communities that did not understand the importance of Elders in their society. The schools also triggered the epidemic of drug and alcohol abuse, which also often lead to Elder abuse.

Otter and the Elders Council have been working on many levels to set Elder abuse awareness and action projects in motion. They are working with different entities, like Niskamoon and the Cree Health Board, to promote multi-level awareness, and they spoke at the General Assembly last September about making Elder abuse a priority issue.

"We presented it at the General Assembly just to open up the can of worms," she said. "The silence was like a scream, when someone is living in that kind of abusive situation."

Since then, they've been accumulating information, communicating with the federal and provincial governments about Elder abuse, and working on making Elder abuse prevention, detection, and intervention a part of the training criteria for frontline workers ranging from nurses and social workers to teachers. It's going slowly, but it's also building steadily.

"You can't just throw things in people's face," Otter said. "We have to go slowly and have people admit things. I remember when I was learning too, an Elder told me, when something's going on, first you have to name it, then talk about it, then you have to plan how to deal with it. You have to take all these little steps. You have to own it! You can't do nothing about it if nobody admits it's going on."

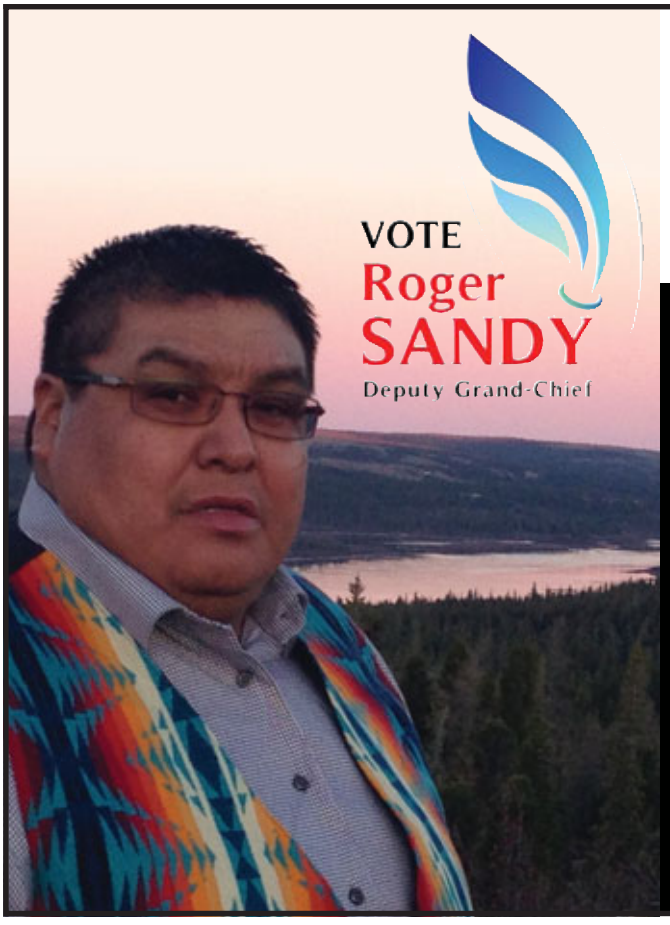
"YOU HAVE TO RELEARN THAT YOU HAVE A VOICE. USE IT AND TALK ABOUT THE DIFFERENT THINGS THAT ARE HAPPENING WITH YOU."

But the real first step, Otter says, is for Elders to begin to speak about abuse – which not many do.

"Elders need to start getting back the voice that they had before; with chief and council, in the old days, the Elders always sitting there, helping, guiding, telling what's needed in the community. But they lost their voice. Even at General Assemblies, they'd come up to me and ask, 'Irene, can you say this for me?' I would reply, 'You have to relearn that you have a voice. Use it and talk about the different things that are happening with you.'"

Because so many Elders are unwilling to talk even about day-to-day subjects, difficult issues like abuse are bound to remain buried. But Otter points out that this is equally the fault of people in the communities where problems are taking place. "We help the children when something is going on in the home, we help the youth, but where are we when it's going on with the Elders?"

That difficulty in discussing important issues isn't just a problem among Elders,



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Waychia,

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I humbly accepted my nomination to run for the position of Deputy Grand Chief because I believe that my experiences and my ideas can contribute positively to the advancement of the important issues that affect our people today.

I created a facebook community page, accessible through www.RogerSandy.com, where I will continue to post my position on some of the important issues affecting our people today and where I hope that, through the solutions I propose and the answers I provide, I can convince you to vote for me.

Thank you,

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Otter points out. Rather, she has noticed that it is systemic within entire families.

"The communication in some families and couples, even adults with parents, it's not very good. With my father I always told him what's going on in my life, and asked what was going on in his. When he got older and got sick, I always told him what was going on in the community and on the trapline." That sort of communication between generations is less common than before, she stresses, and it is important for Crees to regain what they've lost.

"There's quite a few in the community who are trying to go back and relearning our culture. They're not just using the words 'respect and honour' – I've heard that a lot but it's not really helping."

In order to help, Otter says, it's important to provide Elders with opportunities to participate in communities the way they used to.

"We need to have honorariums for different things Elders do in the community – we have to keep them busy too," she stresses. "We can't just shove them aside and tell them, 'Your life is over.' They still have a lot that we need as a community."

Above all, what Otter believes most is that Cree communities can change and improve in order to regain the cultures and traditions they've lost. As those important values are recovered, the people will become stronger and more united, which will allow them to face problems like Elder abuse more effectively. She also underlines that people who abuse Elders do so because they are in trouble and they need support and healing as well. In order to tackle the problem in a way that truly uplifts society, all of these elements need to come into consideration.

Otter concluded, "One of the Elders said that when you want to talk about something, you have to talk about the negative stuff, about what's going on, but you also have to give people something positive too, to say there's a possibility for change. Even for the abuser, sometimes they won't admit it, but we can give them a positive message – there is help for them too."

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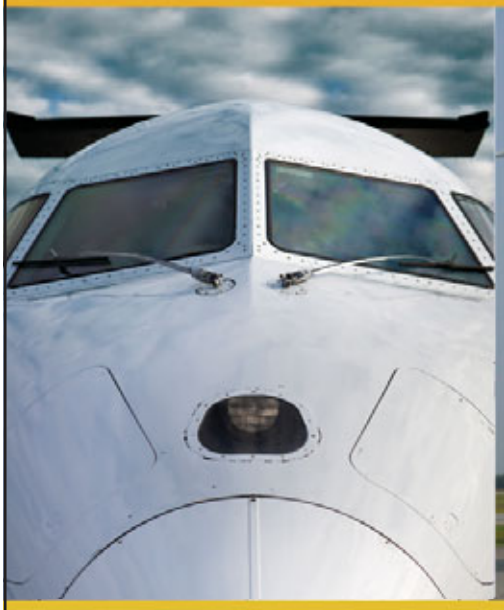

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Mining project gets green light

Oujé-Bougoumou and BlackRock sign BallyHusky Agreement mining deal

by Amy German

The Oujé-Bougoumou Cree Nation and the Grand Council of the Crees/Cree Regional Authority (GCC/CRA) signed an Impact Benefit Agreement June 20 with BlackRock Metals Inc., opening the way for an open-pit mine in Oujé territory. Known as the BallyHusky Agreement, the deal will allow extraction of iron ore and vanadium, which is used to produce specialty steel alloys.

The Oujé Band Council announced community approval of the project in late May. The GCC followed with formal support in early June once it had established that BlackRock would ensure a stable regional environment for the development and operation of the project.

According to GCC/CRA negotiator Abel Bosum, serious talks for this project began in January after an agreement was reached to allow the Crees to monitor the pre-development activities of BlackRock. This ensured that Crees could benefit from associated employment and business opportunities.

From this point on in, Bosum said that business proceeded without a hitch.

"Taking advantage of the experience gained by the Crees on similar agreements, we were able to conclude the BallyHusky Agreement fairly quickly. Throughout, BlackRock actually did a good job of accommodating Oujé-Bougoumou concerns and they always tried to find solutions to those concerns. We quickly established a collaborative relationship which allowed us to build the agreement together," said Bosum.

According to Bosum, the agreement will create funds to support training programs, new Cree businesses and to preserve and enhance Cree culture and traditional activities. It also outlines the Cree role in environmental monitoring during and after the life of the project. Finally, the agreement ensures that the Crees will receive financial benefits through different payment mechanisms and participation in the profitability of the mine.

Iron-ore extraction will serve as the mine's primary goal with vanadium mining serving as a secondary function. Bosum emphasized that every necessary precaution will be taken by BlackRock to ensure environmental protection.

"The environmental management system for the project will be developed in collaboration with the Cree parties. Moreover, the Crees will be intimately involved in the environmental monitoring of the project. The Crees will also have the opportunity to identify environmental indicators that they want monitored. Finally, the Crees will be involved in the development and implementation of the rehabilitation and restoration plan required under the (Cree) Mining Act. It is also our understanding that very little of the ore processing will take place at the mine site," explained Bosum.

According to Oujé-Bougoumou Chief Reggie Neeposh, the community is comfortable with the deal because members were given the necessary latitude to express their environmental concerns. Members also played a major role to ensure the community would benefit from economic spinoffs. This, he says, was all made possible by the CGG/CRA's Cree Mining Act.

"In the past a lot of the companies would just do away with speaking to the people that occupy the land," said Neeposh. "A company will just start out their mining exploration, go about it and before you know it, there is a mine. With the new mining policy the companies are now informed that they must talk to the stakeholders of the land prior to doing any development."

While Neeposh acknowledged the environmental concerns of both Natives and non-Natives, he said the company was able to demonstrate how it would be conducting the onsite drainage and how it would be purifying the water prior to releasing it back into the watershed.

The development is taking place on the traditional territory of the Wapachee family. "The sad part is the loss of the land for the family," Neeposh observed.

"THROUGHOUT, BLACKROCK ACTUALLY DID A GOOD JOB OF ACCOMMODATING OUJÉ-BOUGOUMOU CONCERNS AND THEY ALWAYS TRIED TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THOSE CONCERNS. WE QUICKLY ESTABLISHED A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP WHICH ALLOWED US TO BUILD THE AGREEMENT TOGETHER"

GCC/CRA negotiator Abel Bosum

Norman Wapachee

"MY DAD WAS ALWAYS PROTECTIVE OF THE LAND WHEN IT CAME TO HUNTING AND FISHING AND HIS WAY OF LIFE. THE PEOPLE OF CHIBOUGAMAU TOO EXPRESSED CONCERN AND HE SAID THAT WE NEEDED TO WORK TOGETHER WITH THEM ON THIS. HE ALWAYS SAID THAT RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES COULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE CREE WAY OF LIFE."

"It is now up to between 60-80% of the family's territory that has been claimed for forestry and mining projects."

It is for this reason that there is already discussion within the community to share meat with the Wapachees who cannot hunt on their land and also to take family members out on other traplines.

At the same time, Neeposh explained that it was by actually engaging the family in the consultation process that made a huge difference. One family member worked on the contamination file while another, Norman Wapachee, served as a consultant on the project.

According to Norman Wapachee, 110 family members share the large traditional territory. But Chibougamau cottagers, forestry operations, three mining developments and a possible wind farm are eating away at the territory.

"My fear is that our way of life will be altered forever by development and the concern becomes where do we go? We need a land base to be able to continue to hunt and trap," said Wapachee.

However, Wapachee said that he was able to take a page from his own father, Matthew, when it came to working with development. Matthew Wapachee dealt with the former Campbell mine operators and Norman was able to observe the French and English in the territory who worked there.

Norman said his father would hunt when he wasn't working and then line cut to be able to provide for his family (all 12 natural children and two adopted daughters).

Because there was no consultation with the families being impacted at that time or the Cree, the end result was contamination as the mining laws were very lenient.

And so when it came to BlackRock, Wapachee said that his father was quite concerned as he had seen so much carelessness on the behalf of the Campbell mine. Recent clean-up efforts at the Campbell mine site helped ease those worries.

"My dad was always protective of the land when it came to hunting and fishing and his way of life. The people of Chibougamau too expressed concern and he said that we needed to work together with them on this. He always said that resource development activities could be compatible with the Cree way of life," said Wapachee.

And, through careful negotiations with various family members, Wapachee said that the environmental impact of the project was significantly reduced. For instance, the volume of road development was cut by 40% from the original plan. The number of impacted watersheds was reduced three down to one. Progressive restoration will also see some areas of the land restored while the project is still in operation.

According to Wapachee, the fact that Bosum sat down with the family to help them understand each part of the agreement prior to its signing made an enormous difference when it came to making or breaking this deal.

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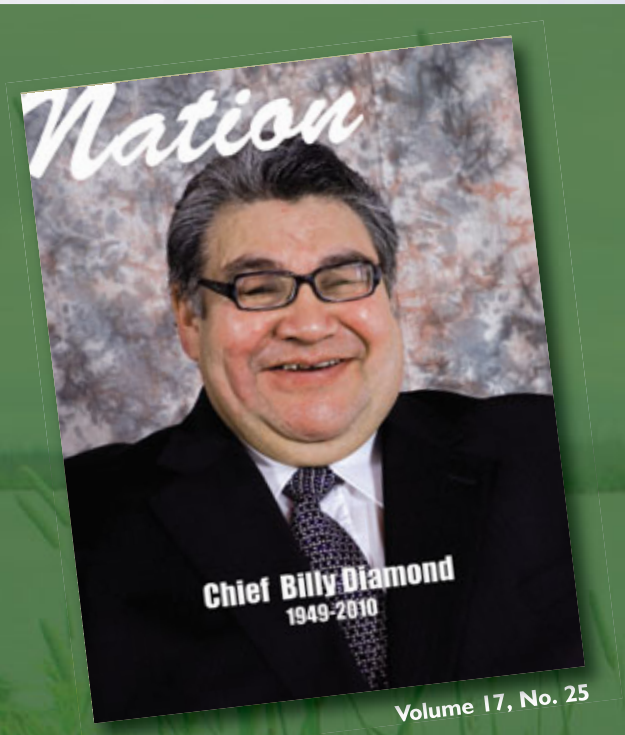
The *Nation* is turning 20! To commemorate this historic occasion, the *Nation* is embarking on a retrospective countdown to its 20th Anniversary in November 2013. In the next 8 issues, the *Nation* flashback will feature some of the *Nation*'s stories, photos and award winning coverage throughout the years, which will be compiled in a 20th collector's edition issue.



October 22, 2010

Farewell to the Chief

By ndiamon

Even in death Billy Diamond still had the ability to hold a crowd in thrall. The moment came early during the funeral service, at the end of a hastily cut film celebrating the man's many achievements. "I told my sons what I want written on my headstone," he said in his famous booming voice, "Gone to a meeting."

With that, the crowd burst into laughter, rose and applauded loudly and in unison for what seemed like minutes. The witticism delivered from beyond the grave set the tone for the day's proceeding.

They came from miles around and filled a hall to way past its legal capacity. There were three busloads from surrounding Cree communities; eight full Dash-8 charters and others driving in. Also present, a delegation from Quebec City and mayors from bordering towns.

Four columns of seats, 24 rows deep and 8 spaces wide. A line of some 30 onlookers filled the darkened balcony. Lining the rear wall some 40 plus joined the who's who of the Cree world seated up front. The large immediate family in mourning filled the front rows. A rough count suggested more than 800 souls, here to bury the Cree Nation's first Grand Chief.

The planes started arriving at eight in the morning. The local Chief and council greeted the arrivals in the airport terminal. A school bus shuttled the visitors to the school for refreshments and rest before the service. Next door in the Gathering Place, the former Chief lay in state. A long line snaked its way down a hallway filled with Diamond's awards, mementoes, photographs, letters of condolence, a Detroit Red Wings jersey, a medal from his Order of Quebec, another from the Aboriginal Achievement Foundation, the black helmet he wore after skull surgery months before. After 15 minutes they entered the hall where the open casket sat. Someone had placed a long strand of braided sweet grass across his chest. A small crowd sat patiently waiting for the service to begin.

Favorite covers from 2010

COUNTDOWN TO 20TH.... 8 ISSUES LEFT

Nation 20 1993-2013 flashback

20th flashback brought to you by ***Cree Nation Youth Council (CNYC)***

The Cree Nation Youth Council (CNYC) has been the representative body, and voice of Cree Youth across Eeyou Istchee since 1985. It has grown from humble beginnings to an organization that has hosted world events, changed the shape of our Nation, and been a starting point for many key figures in modern politics. The CNYC is about youth helping youth to be heard, to be engaged, to achieve their potential and to have opportunities to participate in the political, social, and economic development within Eeyou Istchee. The youth being the largest demographic in the Cree Nation will continue to require authentic leadership to lay a strong foundation for present and future generations.

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Taking the reins

Robert Baribeau on becoming CCDC's new president

by Amy German

According to Robert Baribeau, his new job as President of the Cree Construction and Development Corporation is "a little hectic," but he says that so far things are going well.

Nonetheless, Baribeau has his work cut out for him. The CCDC reported losses in the last fiscal year and faces the challenge of remaining competitive in an ever-changing market. But, looking at his career history, Baribeau says he is well-suited to his new position and is ready to sink his teeth into shaping the company's future.

Baribeau said that he couldn't imagine himself working in anything but the construction industry. It's something he has known most of his life because his father owned a construction company.

After working in the family business, Baribeau spent several years working for various other construction outfits and then moved on to become a construction worker at the Troilus mine. It was there that he first had the opportunity to move up the ladder, taking on a human resources position at Troilus.

From there Baribeau was courted by CCDC to take on a HR position in 2001 and that's when he began his steady climb up the corporate latter, becoming Director General in 2005 and finally becoming the head honcho this year.

"I have a lot of experience with all of the kinds of problems and situations that you encounter in the construction industry because it is one where your biggest asset is people. I can say that I have really mastered problem solving in this specific field," said Baribeau.

When it was announced in January that then-President William MacLeod would be retiring, Baribeau saw his opportunity. While there was an open application process for the position and many others vied for it, in the end he won out.

While MacLeod will be staying on until September during a transition process, Baribeau officially took the reins of the 35-year-old company June 1

Robert Baribeau, President of the Cree Construction and Development Corporation

"This has always been my goal since I began with CCDC. It is a big job and there are a lot of challenges ahead because in the construction world and particularly in the Cree world you have a lot of new companies that are being created through a great deal of these joint ventures. And, Cree Construction is at kind of a crossroads where we need to find new markets and this is what we will be looking at and investing in over the coming year," said Baribeau.

CCDC is still reporting losses, but that does not mean that the company is doing badly, he insisted. It is just a standard procedure in the construction industry for a company to report losses one year and then profits the next as it can take a very long time for projects to pay out, especially as they frequently end up going to court or into litigation to negotiate out a final deal.

As he explained, when a construction company embarks on a job, the conditions may not be as expected and so costs may not be what were originally anticipated. Sometimes you will even find that the client wasn't aware of certain kinds of problems that may exist and would eventually encounter on the job, he said.

He gave the example of a previous contract that CCDC worked on for the SEBJ. Because the contract went into the claims process once it was completed, the company one year wound up reporting a loss at around $20 million a few years back. While this may not have looked so great on paper, once the claim was settled the entity not only managed to recover all of their losses but to make a small profit.

"In Manitoba we have the same kind of situation. There is currently an appreciable loss going on but we have however filed a claim and we have a very good

Catch the radio show called "Iiyuu Companii Tipaachimuun" on JBCCS every 2 weeks Thursday mornings at 8:15-8:45am and replayed on Saturday mornings at 9am.

Iiyuu Companii Tipaachimuun

A presentation of The Board of Compensation and the Cree Regional Economic Enterprises Company

A TALK WITH

William MacLeod,

former President/CEO of Cree Construction and Development Company Ltd and Gestion ADC.

A Cree man from Mistissini, he was a Councillor at the Cree Nation of Mistissini for four years, and then became Deputy Chief for two years. He continued as Executive Director for seven years and Director of Community Development for four years and Treasurer for two. He was the President of the Cree Construction and Development Company from 2002 to 2013.

What is Gestion ADC and what does it do?

Wachiya. Gestion ADC is a Camp, Catering and Janitorial Services Company that provides services for semi remote and remote companies throughout northern Quebec. These companies' camps can be from 25 to over 4,000 person camps. We provide janitorial services of all camp accommodations - rooms, kitchen and common areas; and catering of the three meals a day, plus snack bar for all the workers. Some camp may require restaurants, convenience stores, bars and gas bars. Founded in 1993 in partnership with DOMCO Food Services, GESTION ADC bought out their partners in 1996 and became 100% owned entirely by CREECO.

What are some of the past projects GESTION ADC has worked on?

SEBJ Camp Rupert - 2009-2010: Services for maximum 1,800 camp population. We had 180 employees in catering and janitorial services. We also offer services for convenience store, bar and restaurant.

Hydro-Quebec – Ongoing: Nemiscau, LG-1, LG-2, LG-3, LG-4, LA-1, Brisay residences. Nemiscau and LG-1 Convenience stores.

SNDBC (Chicoutimi) – Ongoing: Chisasibi Restaurant – Chez Asiipii. Chisasibi Work Camp. Cree Camp (Route du Nord near Nemaska). CCDC Construction Camps – Eastmain and Wemindji.

S.E.B.J. EM-1 Camp at Eastmain River - 2004-09: Catering & janitorial services services for 2,400 people. Operating 2 cafeterias, convenience store, bar & restaurants.

GESTION ADC received national recognition in 2008?

Yes, "Recipient of the Fastest Growing Company in 2008" as recognized by Profit Magazine. This award was based on the success during the period of 2004-2008 which saw records revenue and profits for Gestion ADC.

How do you define success in a project?

Our definition of success is based on a number of factors including: profitability, completion of projects on time and on budget, maximizing local resources including local contractors, maximizing local Cree employment, ensuring client satisfaction.

Where does GESTION ADC operate?

Mainly throughout Eeyou Istchee:

Chisasibi – we operate the CCBC work camp. This camp ranges in size from 10-50 people.

Nemaska- we operate the Cree Camp located on Route du Nord and are presently managing a 200-person camp in partnership with Nemaska Development Corporation for a 2-year contract.

Mistissini: we are in a Joint Venture with Sidney Swallow and his family (Kiskinchiish Camp Services), on the works going on with the Stornoway Diamond Mine.

In some cases we bid as GESTION ADC and in others we bid as a Joint Venture where we have partnerships. An example of this would be the Goldcorp Eleanor Gold Mine near Wemindji, we have a joint venture with the Tawich Development Corporation and we are providing the manpower for the catering services and managing the janitorial contract for the project, which is over 800 people today.

In your most successful projects, what has determined the success of the company?

The experience and expertise of our staff make all the difference and impact the success of the company. Some of our team members have been with the company since day 1 in 1993. Presently we have almost 200 people working for Gestion ADC and of these employees over 50 are Cree.

How is GESTION ADC preparing for the future with all the potential mines coming up in Eeyou Istchee?

We are well positioned; we are already in partnership and working with the Swallow family in the Stornoway Diamond Mine project. We are in partnership with Nemaska on the Hydro works in their traditional territory on a refurbishment of the dam and we are in partnership with Wemindji on the Goldcorp Eleanor Gold Mine. I see Gestion ADC continuing to expand in the future providing opportunity for the Cree and playing a key role with many of the projects happening in Eeyou Istchee.

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track record on recovering losses. You do however have to declare things as a loss because they recognize they agree to recognize the amount owed or a court order is made. You can't buck these things and so you have to show your losses," explained Baribeau.

Looking to the future, Baribeau said that CCDC has some excellent prospects on the horizons both in Eeyou Istchee and across the border in Ontario where there is talk of over 100 years of major mining projects in developments being dubbed as mining's new "Ring of Fire."

Baribeau said that CCDC already has a foot in the door for the Ring of Fire. They have been working on projects locally with the Marten Falls Anishinabe First Nation, building winter roads to give the community its first vehicular access.

"They enjoyed their winter road so much that we had to keep it open at their request for one extra week. It was a good experience this year. Marten Falls is our current partner right now in this area and in this area alone there will be more than enough activity for many, many companies," said Baribeau.

Back in Eeyou Istchee, CCDC has also been quite busy with a wide variety of projects: expanding the lodge in Oujé-Bougoumou and taking care of other infrastructure work and gearing up for Chisasibi's High Ground Project, which was outlined in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

The High Ground project will also be another opportunity for CCDC to utilize as much Cree labour as possible and so many economic spinoffs can be expected.

While Baribeau says he is delighted to be in his new position, he recognizes that there may be some bumps on the road ahead. He believes that the greatest challenge he will be facing will be breaking into new markets, though the company has a new plan for this: project management.

CCDC has already begun operating a project management service that will not only act as a means of halting some of the wealth leakage from the Cree communities into the southern world but also puts the company into the ranks of competing for contracts with companies like SNC-Lavalin and Genivar Inc.

"We think that with the number of engineers that we already have at Cree Construction and the 35 years of experience that we have in the north that we can offer an equal if not better service than those companies to the communities when it comes to supervising these works the right way and their budgets," said Baribeau.

What excites him most is becoming top dog though all of the projects up for grabs as a result of the mining and other natural resource developments being prepared.

"On our own side of James Bay there will be all sorts of projects coming up that just have not been announced yet. I think it is going to be very busy," said Baribeau.

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PART OF THE PROBLEM FOR THE AFN WAS THE POSITION TAKEN BY NATIONAL CHIEF ATLEO, WHEN NEWS OF BUDGET REDUCTIONS FIRST AROSE, TO REFUSE CUTS TO INDIVIDUAL FIRST NATIONS.

The belt tightens, again

The Assembly of First Nations faces 30% budget cuts

by Jesse Staniforth

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) received word on June 3 that the federal government would cut its operating budget– yet again – this time by 30%.

There had long been speculation by many people working in Aboriginal advocacy that the Conservative government would likely slash the AFN's funding in the way that other advocacy organizations had been cut. In September of last year, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development announced in a news release that the 2012 Budget contained cuts to the AFN's program funding, as well as cuts to its core funding, which had already been announced.

According to AFN CEO Peter Dinsdale, "We were expecting some reductions, but more in the 5 to 10% range – certainly not the 30% range it came in at."

There was an immediate outcry across social media, with many accusing the Harper government of deliberately attacking Aboriginal organizations. But Dinsdale didn't see the cuts quite that way, noting that advocacy organizations across political spectrums are also being cut. He did underline, however, that the choice to cut political organizations instead of cutting Aboriginal Affairs bureaucracy sends a certain message.

"It may be seen as being more motivated to handcuff political organizations as opposed to [reducing] the bureaucracy. I think there's probably a balance there that becomes questionable," he said.

Dinsdale agreed that the cuts continue what he described as a legislative agenda hostile to Aboriginal organizations. Laws tabled by the Conservative government have included the controversial Omnibus Budget Bills C-38 and C-45, which many saw as threatening to Aboriginal rights and sovereignty, and which sparked the Idle No More protest movement.

However, Dinsdale said the federal government's attitude to Aboriginal groups and issues is multifaceted.

"It's peculiar," he said, "because the other side of that coin is their willingness to engage in the Crown-First Nations gathering and other high-level talks aimed at resetting the relationship, which would seem to be a positive move. So as always, the relationship with the federal government is tricky."

The depth of the cuts, Dinsdale said, will result in reduced policy staff and a capacity to engage in direct advocacy activities, such as organizing meetings, writing and publishing reports, and pushing for a broader impact on the government's policy decisions.

"We're trying to work with federal government in terms of treaty implementation and comprehensive claim reform, education reform, the need to deal with murdered and missing Aboriginal women – as tangible examples," he said. "That is predicated on the ability to have staff, to pull together groups of chiefs to have discussions and come to the Hill to advocate. All of these are the kinds of things that are impacted by the funding cuts – the basic capacity and ability to do what advocacy is."

The AFN cuts come halfway into a year that began with Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence on hunger strike, countrywide actions by Idle No More groups,

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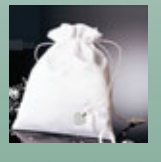

ACTIVISTS LIKE CINDY BLACKSTOCK HAVE WARNED FIRST NATIONS ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS THAT A GOVERNMENT HOSTILE TO THEIR INTERESTS COULD EASILY STARVE THEM BY STRIPPING THEIR FUNDING.

and the January 11 meeting between Stephen Harper and National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo and other chiefs. Dinsdale said that the rapport between Aboriginal groups and the federal government was already volatile and that news of the cuts won't encourage a greater harmony.

"I think it's leading into a summer where we anticipate more vocal activity from Idle No More and the grassroots," he said.

Part of the problem for the AFN, he explained, was the position taken by National Chief Atleo, when news of budget reductions first arose, to refuse cuts to individual First Nations.

"It seems like that spirit has been retained," he said. "But now cuts are coming on the backs of advocacy organizations like the AFN – and, we understand, 45 other organizations received similar reductions. It's not just us. It seems to be more of an across-the-board approach, and I think the long-term impacts of that are going to be extremely detrimental and are not going to be fully known until they've been in place."

For some time, activists like Cindy Blackstock have warned First Nations advocacy organizations that a government hostile to their interests could easily starve them by stripping their funding.

Dinsdale agreed that financial independence from the federal government would be a positive development, but cautioned that it wouldn't be easy to achieve.

"We certainly see it as an important thing for us to strive towards," he said. "But I have to tell you there are not a lot of obvious high-valued revenue sources there simply for the taking. We charge fees for people to attend our chiefs assemblies, we hold golf tournaments, and we do all kinds of other social-enterprise-type activities around the margins of our work to raise funds, but it's simply not enough to keep up with the nature of the changing policy environment."

For the AFN to continually adapt to the demands placed on them would require significantly greater resources than the AFN currently has available through non-traditional funding channels, Dinsdale said.

"The challenge for us, as with any non-profit in this environment, is to find ways to leverage our activities into potentially profit-generating activities," he observed. "We do not pretend to be business experts. We aren't hired here to increase shareholder value or to find profit margins in any revenue streams that we have. These are the types of things that we're going to have to become more and more engaged in. But I'm not optimistic that we have the kind of existing expertise – nor frankly even the mandate – to do these things."

The mandate for the AFN, underlined Dinsdale, is to respond to chiefs and the assembly and advocate on their behalf.

"As a non-profit with these extremely challenging financial pressures, we have to figure out how to do more with less. It's not in our DNA to be Fortune-500 companies. We'll leave that to the businesspeople. But I'd anticipate that this is the kind of direction that governments would like to see us going. I'm not sure if we have the proper tools yet to respond to that."

Though the cuts will make the AFN more difficult to run, Dinsdale stressed that they will leave the organization in a very different state than many local Aboriginal governments.

"I don't want to speak for them, but I know that the challenges that we face pale by comparison to the challenges that local First Nation chiefs face every single day trying to house people in their communities and provide clean drinking water and the most basic sanitation services that most Canadians take for granted," he emphasized.

"I think it becomes difficult for us to compare our needs. We will survive, we will be creative, and ultimately we'll become stronger as a result of this. We're less encumbered and controlled by the federal government and more able to fully articulate the demands that we have. Cuts like this make our job more difficult, but make us more determined than ever to make sure we find ways forward."

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By Amy German

Pill problems

Improper medication storage leads to a mom's worst nightmare

It was a typical evening for Waskaganish's Bessie Gillies, before it turned into one of the most traumatic events a parent can go through.

Coming home late from her mother's with her three children aged nine, eight and two, Gillies was rushing to get a meal served to the family and catch up on household chores.

"My husband has one of these little bags that look like a cosmetic case and he has always put his medication in there. When we arrived home at 9:00 at night with take-out, I had noticed the bag of pills was on top of the microwave. My husband had left them there, but I figured that they would be okay in that spot for a little while," said Gillies.

Leaving the room for a moment to pick up her laundry, Gillies returned to her kitchen to find that two-year-old Jarrell had not only managed to get the case of pills down from the microwave but had also managed to open it.

"I am not sure how many he took, but when I caught him he was putting a pill into his mouth. While I called at him to stop and managed to get straight to the bag to check what he had taken, I noticed that five of the [foil] packages for the Adalat [60 mg] were opened and missing," said Gillies.

Gillies, who is also a Community Health Representative (CHR), then called the clinic. She spoke to a nurse who quickly notified the doctor on call, Dr. David Dannenbaum, who insisted that the child be brought to the clinic immediately.

While Gillies wasn't sure if her son had actually taken all five pills, it didn't matter as even a small dose of a long-acting medication like Adalat could have serious implications for the small boy.

The toddler was treated with a charcoal solution to help protect his system from the potential effects of the medication. Because Waskaganish does not have the necessary medical equipment it needed to monitor Jarrell's situation, Gillies soon found herself and her son en route to Montreal with a medivac team.

Watching her young son vomit up charcoal on the plane, Gillies said that she felt like a terrible parent because she didn't move the pills right away off of the microwave when she came in.

She and her son were lucky, however. Upon arrival at the Montreal Children's Hospital, Gillies was told by the medical staff there that it may have been possible that the child had not taken the medication after all or that the charcoal solution may have blocked the absorption of the Adalat into the child's system.

Still, they remained at the hospital from their pre-dawn arrival until 5 pm, when Gillies was told that it was finally safe to leave.

According to Dr. Dannenbaum, Gillies went through an all-too-common problem that can end with deadly consequences in a few seconds of inattentiveness, even to responsible parents like Bessie Gillies.

While Dr. Dannenbaum said he sees this happen several times a year at the Waskaganish clinic, with a little caution it be avoided entirely by ensuring that all medication is stored out of reach of children at all times.

"You need to keep in mind that what is often a regular dose for an adult could be quite deadly for a baby or a small child. We often see this kind of thing happen with toddlers aged 2-4, but it also happens with older kids as a lot of medication looks like candy and so they eat them," said Dr. Dannenbaum.

As for Gillies, no amount of caution is now enough for her and she is careful with medication no matter what the scenario. She never wants to find herself return to that horrifying night. Even now, when she goes into the homes of others with her children, she makes sure that medication is out of reach because while she knows just how quickly a situation can turn, and not everybody is always so conscientious about where medicine should be kept.

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Bullying

Bully as defined in the Oxford Dictionary – "persecutor, oppressor, tyrant, tormentor, intimidator" – a person who frightens or persecutes weaker people.

Bullying has been a hot topic concerning youth and it certainly has been very traumatic for many, especially those close to the victim.

Here in Eeyou Istchee, this bullying problem has also affected our nation, especially in our schools. I realize that this issue has been discussed within schools and prevention is being sought out. There have been workshops done to train staff to help deal with this antagonizing problem.

Personally, I have yet to see any prevention of bullying within our schools. Furthermore, what is so sad about this issue is that there is also a lot of bullying within our workplace. By refusing, this includes all adults within a workplace, to admit to the bullying problem among adults, then we are all contributing to the hurt and unhealthy environment we cause our clientele, in this case our student population.

After all, how are we as adults supposed to teach our youth to comprehend the effects of bullying when we as adults are part of this horrific problem? As a bully, how can one help a victim when a bully can't comprehend the true feelings of the victim?

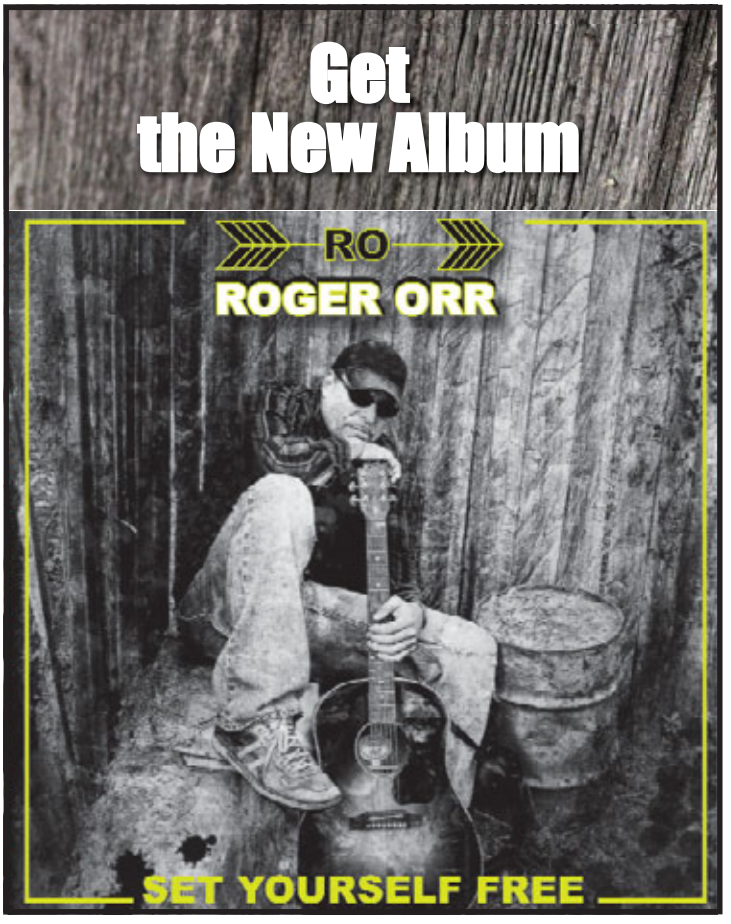
I believe it is urgently necessary for those adults who are involved in bullying acts to take a good long look at themselves and try to place themselves in the shoes of their victim. If these bullies continue to deny their problem, then they will continue to contribute to the unhealthy environment created within their workplace.

What saddens me even more is the fact that some adult bullies were given mandates to help students deal with the issue of bullying, yet they themselves are known to bully and seem to refuse to accept their problem.

As helpers, we cannot help others, if we cannot help ourselves first. We must first work through our own issues, in this case, bullying. We need to deal with our problem first. Perhaps, there are other underlying issues that one refuses to deal with. This can be a contributing factor to one's bullying problem as it contributes to internal anger and resentment.

Our youth are the future and adults need to do everything within their power to help eliminate this devastating problem. If we want a healthy nation, then we all must help ourselves first whatever our issues may be. We can't continue to brush our problems under the rug. This is all part of healing and wellness.

Anonymous Victim



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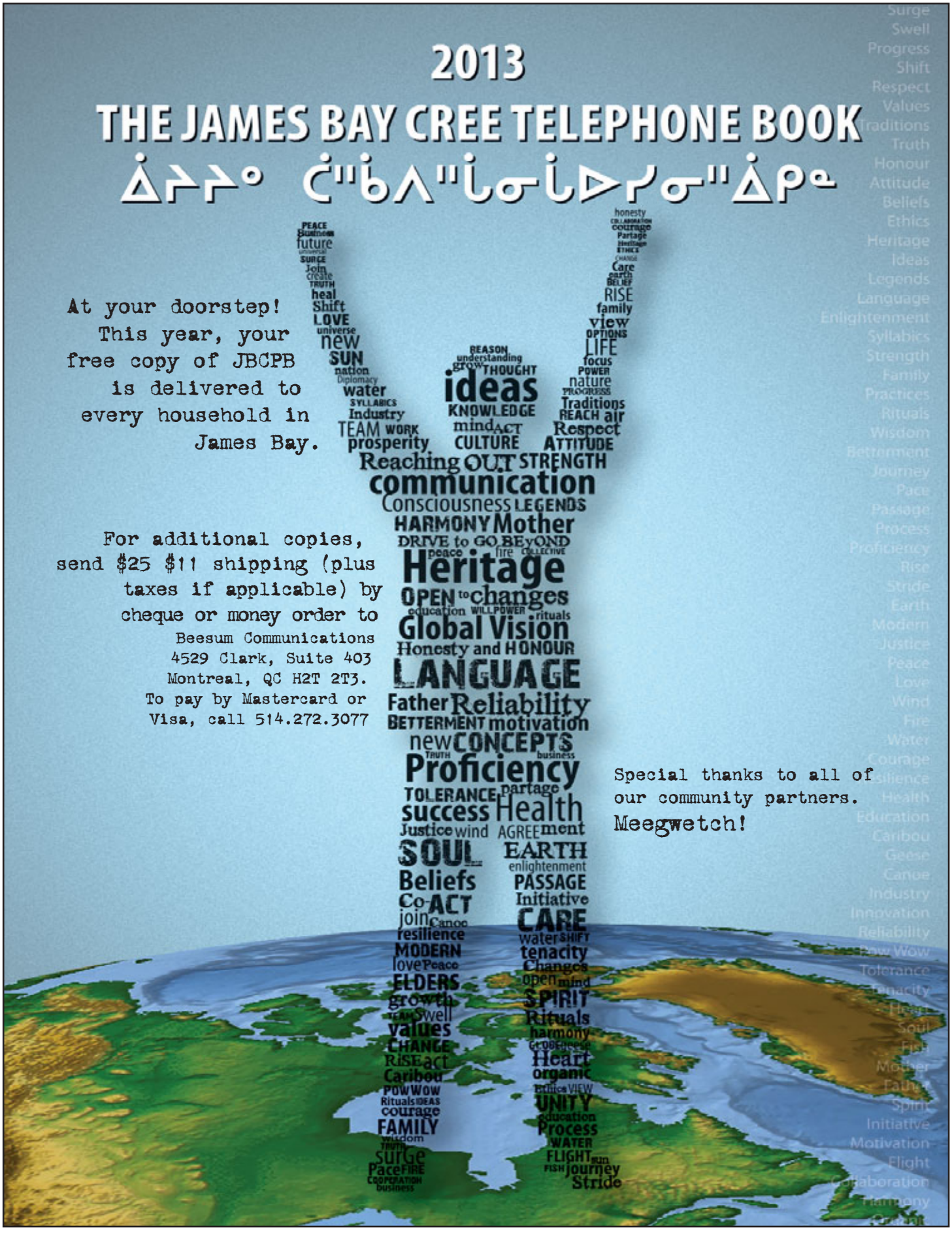
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UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

Democracy Is Fragile

by Xavier Kataquapit

I was in Istanbul, Turkey, this past winter and I had the pleasure to walk in Taksim Square. I was impressed with the city as compared to the major centres in Morocco and Egypt I have seen. The ancient city, once known as Constantinople in honour of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, was modern, clean, well-organized and generally safe.

The highlights of my visit included the huge market, incredible ancient mosques, the Hagia Sophia, an historic cathedral and, of course, Taksim Square. It was obvious to me at the time that the square, which features one of the few major green spaces in the city, was a favourite meeting place for local people. The wide, pedestrian-only main street known as Istiklal (Independence) Avenue featured upscale shops, cafés and antique-like trams.

This street was full of the local populace shopping and simply hanging out. There were tourists from all over the world, many from the cruise ships docked at the nearby port. The port and city have had an interesting and colourful history dating back to 660 BC when it was founded as Byzantium. It was then called Constantinople under Roman rule. When the Ottomans took over in 1453 it became a major Islamic centre.

The most intriguing aspect about this city is that part of it is in Asia and the other in Europe. By simply taking a taxi across the bridge or using a ferryboat I could go back and forth between the two continents with ease. The two continents feature the meeting place of the Bosphorus, Black Sea and Sea of Marmara and this strategic location has made it a major trading centre for thousands of years.

I sat in the cafés along the port and sipped Turkish tea while most people around me sucked on huge tobacco water pipes. I was told it was apple tobacco. Apple tea is also a favourite drink. The local people seemed very western in their dress and their politics. I met many university students in the cafés and they were all very open and interested in life in Canada.

In contrast, I noted that in Cairo, Egypt, people seemed downtrodden and oppressed but in Istanbul there was a feeling of rich culture and progressive, positive attitudes. There were many tourist attractions and arts festival posters announcing concerts and exhibitions. I was told that although much of the country is Muslim, Istanbul has a history of being more cosmopolitan mostly due to its strategic location.

What a shock it was for me to read in the news a few weeks after my visit that there were riots at Taksim Square because the hard-line government had decided to develop the park near the square. I recalled my peaceful stroll through the old city and then up the pedestrian street to the lively and beautiful Taksim Square and it made me sad to think that the local people had to take to the streets to protect their most precious part of their city.

It also occurred to me as I read about the riots that beneath the facade of this incredible historic city with all the modern conveniences there was little democracy in governance. As is the case with many countries in the Middle East and Africa, our western governments help to make sure we encourage the election or appointment of regimes that are friendly to us. That is fine for business but often creates big problems for the local people who have to put up with semi- or non-democratic governments that in many cases are very right-wing and or run by religious fundamentalists.

All this made me think about democracy and how really fragile it is. Like the Turks in Istanbul and so many other people protesting in other parts of the world, we must remember that we owe it to ourselves and future generations to make sure that our freedoms, rights and liberties are not being eroded or being taken away from us.

I thought about the recent protests by my people across Canada and it made me feel good that we have not forgotten that we do have a right to let our governments know that we are not happy with something they have done. If we care more about what sports team won the game the other night rather than what our governments are doing, then we could end up in a country we never bargained on.

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BlackRock Mining Project Public Comments Invited

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency is conducting a comprehensive study type environmental assessment of the BlackRock Mining Project located in Quebec. The Agency invites the public to comment on the potential environmental effects of the project and the proposed measures to prevent or mitigate those effects as described in a summary of the proponent's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

BlackRock Metals Inc. is proposing the development of an iron, titanium and vanadium mine with an estimated production capacity of 20,000 to 50,000 tonnes per day, located within the territory covered by the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement*, in the municipalities of Baie-James and Chibougamau. The project would potentially include an open pit, a processing plant, an access road, a transmission line, and a railway track approximately 27 kilometres in length.

Written comments must be submitted **by July 24, 2013** to:

BlackRock Mining Project
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
901-1550 D'Estimauville Avenue
Québec, QC G1J 0C1
Telephone: 418-649-6444
Fax: 418-649-6443
E-mail: MinierBlackRockMining@ceaa-acee.gc.ca

To view the summary of the EIS or for more information, visit the Agency's website at www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca (registry reference number 62105). All comments received will be considered public.

Copies of the summary of the EIS are also available for viewing at the following locations:

City Hall 145 Springer Boulevard Chapais, QC	Municipal Library 601 Third Street Chibougamau, QC
207 Opemiska Meskino Oujé-Bougoumou, QC	1 Chief Louis Gull Street Waswanipi, QC
Isaac Shecapio Sr. Administrative Building 187 Main Street Mistissini, QC	Mashteuiatsh Library 77 Uapakalu Street Mashteuiatsh, QC

This project is being assessed using a science-based approach under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

Following this comment period, the Agency will prepare a comprehensive study report, setting out its conclusions on the environmental effects, the proposed mitigation measures, and the significance of any remaining adverse environmental effects. A public comment period on the Comprehensive Study Report will be announced later.

Canada

THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE QUEBEC SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

The Mistassini Hostels have been added to Schedule F of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement ("IRSS Agreement") for the period of September 1, 1971 to June 30, 1978.

To all who resided at the Mistassini Hostels in Northern Quebec between September 1, 1971 and June 30, 1978

BE ADVISED that the Mistassini Hostels have been added to the list of "Indian Residential Schools" under the IRSS Agreement for the period of September 1, 1971 to June 30, 1978. Justice Rolland of the Superior Court of Justice has ordered that former residents of the Mistassini Hostels who resided there during the period of September 1, 1971 to June 30, 1978 are eligible to apply for compensation in the form of a Common Experience Payment (CEP). As well, those former residents who suffered sexual and/or serious physical abuses, or other abuses that caused serious psychological effects while at these hostels, may apply for additional compensation under the Independent Assessment Process (IAP).

All **CEP** applications relating to the Mistassini Hostels must be filed **on or before September 2, 2013**. All **IAP** applications relating to the Mistassini Hostels filed **on or before September 2, 2013** will be considered to have been received by September 19, 2012.

This Notice extends only to applications relating to residence at the Mistassini Hostels. ***It does not alter the existing deadlines under the IRSS Agreement in place for other eligible Indian Residential Schools.***

For more information on both processes, please call toll free, 1.866.879.4913, or go to www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca to read the Settlement Agreement and other Court approved notices, or write to Residential Schools Settlement, Suite 3-505, 133 Weber Street North, Waterloo, Ontario N2J 3G9. The IRS Crisis Line (1.866.925.4419) provides immediate and culturally appropriate counselling support to former students who are experiencing distress.

For more information call 1.866.879.4913 or visit www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca.

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONAL MESSAGES

I would like to congratulate my daughter Edith Atchynia and Lee-Thomas George on the birth of a wonderful blessing, baby girl, Shequin-Neebeesh Charlotte Leevanna Waskimabinogwow George on May 24, 2013 at 3:34am in Val d'Or, QC. Take good care of your little princess. We love her so much! From mom, dad, Wasashkun and sisters from Whapmagoostui.

I'd like to wish my mom Queenie Moses-Gilpin a happy belated birthday :) I love you.

EMPLOYMENT

Marketing and Development Officer: The Marketing & Development Officer is responsible for developing & implementing fundraising strategies to achieve strategic goals, to ensure new funding revenue streams are developed. For a more detailed job description see our website: www.cfncs.com-employment

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meetings in Mistissini: Alcoholics Anonymous, Tuesday's Hope Meeting, are at 7PM at the Mamou-Wechidodow Building Amisk Street. **Alanon Meetings** are on Tuesdays as well at 7PM at the Mamou-Wechidodow Building Amisk Street. **Alateen Meetings** are on Mondays at 3:30PM at the Reception Centre 282 Main Street. These meetings are all open meetings.

TD Scholarships for Community Leadership - Apply today! Applications available at Your high school or CEGEP (in Quebec) Online at www.td.com/scholarship or Call 1-800-308-8306 TTY (Text telephone) 1-800-361-1180

Cultural Manual for Foster and Adoptive parents of Aboriginal Children, launched at the last Gathering of the NETWORK on October 3... CHECK IT OUT! www.reseaumtl-network.com/eng/Portals/5/Cultural%20Manual.pdf

The Aviva Community Fund is Canada's longest running online community competition. With over $2.5 million dollars given away to date, the Aviva Community Fund is making a difference in communities across the country. Submit your idea for positive change and have a chance at sharing in this year's $1 million Aviva Community Fund.

For more info go to http://www.avivacommunityfund.org/

Kid's Help Phone Line:
1-800-668-6868
(www.kidshelpphone.ca)

Youth Helpline: 1-800-263-2266 (www.teljeunes.com)

Parents' Helpline: 1-800-361-5085
(www.parenthelpline.ca)

Missing Children's Network: They'll help you find kids who have run away or disappeared.
514-843-4333
(www.enfant-retourquebec.ca)

Drug Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626
(www.drogue-aidereference.qc.ca)

Gambling Addiction help and reference: 1-800-265-2626
(www.info-reference.qc.ca)

S.O.S. Conjugal Violence:
1-800-363-9010
(www.sosviolenceconjugale.com)

Health and Sexuality Resources Center: 1-888-855-7432 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) (www.criss.org)

Gay Helpline: 1-888-505-1010 (Monday to Friday, 8 am to 3 am and Saturday-Sunday, 11 am to 3 am)

The Native Women's Shelter of Montreal: 1-866-403-4688
(www.nwsm.info)

Suicide Action Québec:
1-866-277-3553
(www.suicide-quebec.net)

Residential School Survivors: A 24 hour toll-free crisis line is available to provide immediate emotional assistance and can be reached 24-hours a day, seven days a week: 1-866-925-4419. Other support services and information for survivors is available on the AFN website at: www.afn.ca/residentialschools/resources

Concordia University, Montreal:

The Centre for Native Education has changed its name to the Aboriginal Student Resource Centre (ASRC). The new name is inclusive of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis students the centre serves and recognizes its role as a resource for the Concordia community. For any further details contact: aboriginalcentre@concordia.ca or 514-848-2424 ext. 7327.

EMPLOYMENT OFFER

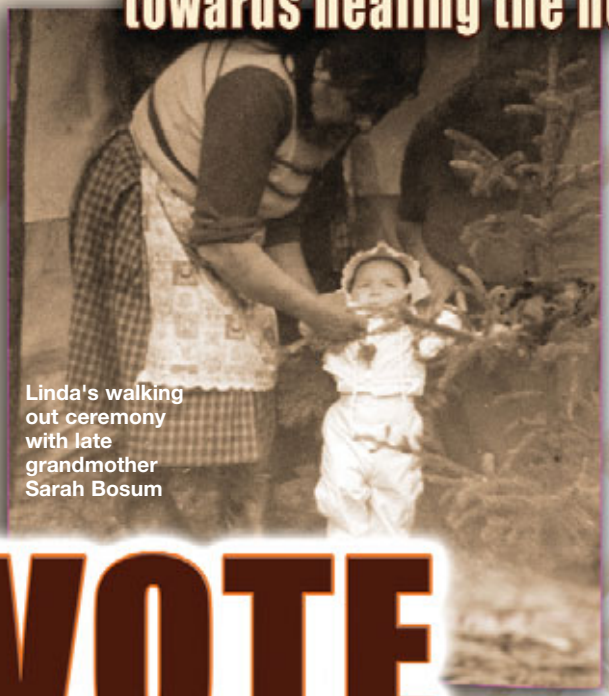
Our company is looking for Account Managers, Bookkeepers and Sales Representatives needed to work on their own flexible schedule time. It pays $1500-$2000 a month plus benefits and takes only a little of your time.

Requirements

* Should be a computer literate.
* 2-3 hours access to the internet weekly.
* Must be 21 yrs and above of age
* Must be efficient and dedicated

Contact us for more details. If you are interested and need more information send your resumes to ruthmace7@gmail.com.

Take action engaging unity, compassion, and gender-balanced towards healing the heartbeat of Eeyou Istchee



Linda's walking out ceremony with late grandmother Sarah Bosum

DESIGNED BY: REZDUDE.CA

Wisdom - Truth - Humility Courage - Honesty - Respect - Love

VOTE Linda.ca

for Deputy Grand Chief

A leader with positive energy to act and filled with LOVE and HOPE for balance, wellness, compassionate change and leading all living beings to succeed in all aspects...the true spirit of Nishiiyuu!!!

"Mother Earth provides everything that we need and it is freely given. When you look at the earth, you can see everything that helps you – the medicine, the air you breathe, the wind. You hear the rustling of the leaves, the howling wind, the crashing waves on the shore. When I look at the Earth, I see medicine in the trees. I see medicine in the sand, the rocks and Water.....Which is life."

Late Elder Sally Matthew
wife of Elder Robbie Matthew, Chisasibi

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Vision for the Future

A Focus on Youth

Educational Reform - Education
Today's Readers – Tomorrow's Leaders
meaningful, authentic, engaging classes and lessons

Healthy Nation - Health
Active families. local/regional. coordination, collaboration

Empowering Community - Economy
Good business done right- strong and properous
governance - responsible and transparent leadership=confidence

Environmental Integrity - Environment
Renewable Energy

www.RobertKitchen.net

Let's Talk - More Action!

Proactive and Intentional Actions

FOR DEPUTY GRAND CHIEF

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